

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11  
HA-05 /069 W  
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R 141528Z JUN 78  
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8943  
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN  
AMEMBASSY ACCRA  
AMEMBASSY COTONOU  
AMCONSUL IBADAN  
AMCONSUL KADUNA  
AMEMBASSY LOME  
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY  
AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA  
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 7365

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PGOV, PDEV, NI, SEUM  
SUBJECT: THE EMRGENCE OF POLITICAL PARTIES

REF: LAGOS 7328 NOTAL B) LAGOS 7170 (NOTAL C) LAGOS A-64  
D) LAGOS 7306 NOTAL E) LAGOS 7183 NOTAL  
BEGIN SUMMARY: WITH THE CONCLUSION OF THE CA, ATTENTION  
IS TURNING TO THE LIFTING OF THE BAN ON POLITICS AND THE  
EMERGENCE OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA. IT NOW APPEARS  
THAT A MULTIPARTY SYSTEM WILL DEVELOP WITH TWO  
NORTHERN BASED PARTIES, CHIEF AWOLOWO'S GROUP, CLUB 19,  
THE SOCIALISTS, AND OTHERS. HOWEVER, THE SITUATION CON-  
TINUES TO REMAIN FLUID AND CHANGES CAN BE EXPECTED. END SUMMARY

1. WITH THE CONCLUSION OF THE DELIBERATIONS IS THE  
CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY (CA) ON THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION,  
POLITICAL SPECULATION NOW CENTERS ON THE ANTICIPATED  
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LIFTING OF THE BAN ON POLITICAL ACTIVITIES AND THE  
EMERGENCY OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA. THE CON-  
SENSUS AMONG CA MEMBERS AND JOURNALISTS SEEMS TO BE THAT THE  
FMG WILL PROBABLY LIFT THE BAN ON POLITICS ON  
JULY 29, THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE COUP WHICH OVERTHREW  
THE GOWON GOVERNMENT, INSTEAD OF WAITING UNTIL OCTOBER 1  
AS PREVIOUSLY STATED. AT THAT TIME, VARIOUS POLITICAL PARTIES

WHICH HAVE BEEN ORGANIZED IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS WILL EMERGE FROM THE WOODWORK AND BEGIN ACTIVE CAMPAIGNING FOR THE 1979 ELECTIONS.

2. ALTHOUGH THE FEDERAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION'S (FEDECO) GUIDELINES FOR THE RECOGNITION OF POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE NOT BEEN PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED, PRESS REPORTS INDICATE THAT A SIX-MEMBER FEDECO COMMITTEE HEADED BY CHAIRMAN CHIEF ANI HAS DRAWN UP A SET OF REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE FMG'S ELECTORAL DECREE 73 (1977) WHICH FOLLOWS THE LANGUAGE CONTAINED IN PARAS 170-178 OF THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION AS APPROVED BY THE CA. THUS, FOR A PARTY TO BE RECOGNIZED, IT MUST ADHERE TO THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES:

--"ITS MEMBERSHIP IS OPEN TO EVERY NIGERIAN CITIZEN IRRESPECTIVE OF HIS PLACE OF ORIGIN, RELIGION, ETHNIC GROUPING OR SEX.

-- A COPY OF ITS CONSTITUTION IS REGISTERED IN THE PRINCIPAL OFFICE OF THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION.

--ITS NAME, EMBLEM OR MOTTO HAS NO ETHNIC, OR RELIGIOUS CONNOTATION AND DOES NOT GIVE THE APPEARANCE THAT THE ASSOCIATION'S ACTIVITIES ARE CONFINED TO A PART ONLY OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA OF NIGERIA.

--ITS HEADQUARTERS IS SITUATED IN THE FEDERAL CAPITAL.

--IT SHALL SUBMIT TO THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION FOR THE FEDERATION A DETAILED ANNUAL STATEMENT AND ANALYSIS OF ITS SOURCES OF FUNDS AND OTHER ASSETS TOGETHER WITH A SIMILAR STATEMENT OF ITS EXPENDITURE.

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--IT SHALL NOT HOLD OR POSSESS ANY FUNDS OR OTHER ASSETS OUTSIDE NIGERIA NOR SHALL IT BE ENTITLED TO RETAIN ANY FUNDS OR ASSETS REMITTED OR SENT TO IT FROM ABROAD.

--IT SHALL NOT RETAIN, ORGANISE, TRAIN OR EQUIP ANY PERSON FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENABLING HIM TO BE EMPLOYED FOR THE USE OR DISPLAY OF PHYSICAL FORCE OR COERCION IN PROMOTING ANY POLITICAL OBJECT OR INTEREST."

3. MOST OF THESE REQUIREMENTS ARE SELF-EXPLANATORY IN THAT THEY ARE AIMED AT REDUCING, AT LEAST FORMALLY, THE TRADITIONAL BUGABOO OF NIGERIANS POLITICS, REGIONALISM/ TRIBALISM, AND ALLOWING THE FMG A HANDLE ON PARTY FINANCIAL MATTERS, ANOTHER TRADITIONALLY DUBIOUS AREA OF NIGERIAN PARTY POLITICS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE NASCENT PARTIES ARE NOW WORKING ON MEETING THESE REQUIREMENTS. FOR EXAMPLE, AS REPORTED IN REF A, WE HAVE BEEN CONTACTED BY THE WAZIRI IBRAHIM GROUP IN SEARCH OF A COPY OF THE 1976 DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM UPON WHICH THEY HOPE TO BASE THEIR POLICY STATEMENT:

4. THE NUMBER AND COMPOSITION OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES WHICH WILL EMERGE THIS SUMMER IS NOT YET AT ALL CLEAR. POLITICAL MANEUVERING IS CONTINUING TO TAKE PLACE WHICH COULD STILL CHANGE THE COMPOSITION OF PARTIES

KALEIDOSCOPICALLY BEFORE THEY EMERGE INTO PUBLIC LIGHT. NEVERTHELESS, IT APPEARS THAT WE WILL SEE THE FOLLOWING CONTENDERS:

----DESPITE THE DISCUSSION REPORTED IN REF B WHICH IS AIMED AT MAINTAINING NORTHERN UNITY, IT APPEARS THAT THERE WILL BE TWO NORTHERN-BASED PARTIES. ONE WILL BE HEADED BY EITHER SHEHU SHEGARI OR AMINO KANO. SEGARI IS THE MORE LIKELY LEADER GIVEN KANO'S RECENT ILL HEALTH. THE PARTY WILL HAVE STRONG TIES WITH THE IBO EAST. (IN THAT REGARD, BU.U. NZERIBE, AND IBO LEADER IN THE CA, RECENTLY TOLD THE PAO THAT HE WOULD BE THE VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE ON A SHEHU SHEGARI TICKET.)

-- WAZIRI IBRAHIM'S PARTY WHICH WILL BE BASED IN THE NORTH WILL ALSO EMPLOY A NORTH/EAST ELECTORAL STRATEGY  
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(REF C). WAZIRI IBRAHIM'S GROUP MAY BE THE BEST ORGANIZED PROTO PARTY AT THE MOMENT AND HAS NO FINANCIAL PROBLEMS, GIVEN IBRAHIM'S PERSONAL WEALTH.  
--CHIEF AWOLOWO'S PARTY. AWOLOWO HAS DONE MORE COVERT CAMPAIGNING THAN ANY OTHER POLITICAN. HIS PARTY WILL BE BASED ON THE OLD ACTION GROUP STRONGHOLDS IN THE WEST.  
--CLUB 19 (REFS D AND E). THE CLUB WHICH EMERGED AS A FORCE IN CA PROCEEDINGS WILL ATTEMPT TO BUILD A SOTHERN/ MIDDLE BELT COALITION. THE CLUB'S BIGGEST PROBLEMS ARE ITS LACK OF LEADERSHIP WITH A NATIONAL IMAGE, A SITUATION WHICH COULD BE ELIMINATED IF FORMER PRESIDENT AZIKIWE COMES OUT OF RETIREMENT TO HEAD THE TICKET, AND THE FACT THAT CHIEF AWOLOWO WILL DIVIDE THE SOUTH.  
--THE SOCIALISTS. ACCORDING TO RECENT PRESS REPORTS, IT WAS DECIDED AT A JUNE 10-11 MEETING IN BENIN CITY TO SET UP A SOCIALIST PARTY. IT WILL BE A SMALL GROUP IN ANY CASE, BUT EXACTLY HOW SMALL WILL BE DETERMINED, ACCORDING TO SEVERAL MCAS, BY THE NUMBER OF SOCIALISTS WHO THROW THEIR LOT IN WITH CHIEF AWOLOWO.  
--VARIOUS MINOR PARTIES BASED ON REGIONS, SMALL GROUPS OR ECCENTRICS. FOR EXAMPLE, ADEBOLA ODEYEMI, THE SECRETARY OF THE NIGERIAN FARMERS REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL, RECENTLY ANNOUNCED THAT HE WOULD SET UP A FARMERS' PARTY. NIGERIAN ROCK STAR FELA ANIKULAPO-KUTI HAS ALSO EXPRESSED INTEREST IN FORMING A PARTY.

5. COMMENT: WE HAVE REPORTED IN THE PAST THAT THE POLITICAL SITUATION CONCERNING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARTIES WAS EXTREMELY FLUID. THAT REMAINS TRUE. WE CAN EXPECT A VARIETY OF MOVEMENTS TO EMERGE AND TO PROSPER OR DIE OR ALLY WITH EACH OTHER BEFORE THE PICTURE STABILIZES LATER IN THE YEAR. IN THE MEANTIME, MANY NIGERIANS MAY BE TEMPTED TO FOLLOW THE ADVICE OF AN OFFICIAL AT THE WAZIRI IBRAHIM "HQS" WHO SUGGESTED TO  
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US THAT "A WISE MAN SHOULD JOIN SEVERAL PARTIES SO THAT  
HE WILL HAVE AN LEAST ONE LEFT IN THE END." END COMMENT.  
WYMAN

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## Message Attributes

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